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AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION IN DENMARK: ORCID AND REPOSITORIES

Adrian Price

In Denmark all 8 universities (and several other institutions in the educational sector) use the same system to register publications, Pure, from the Danish software vendor Atira A/S¹. As yet there is no central repository of bibliographic data which all universities could subscribe to, to enable re-use in local repositories: each university must ensure ingest of bibliographic data into local systems, by methods which fit in with local conditions. There are several methods used: central registration by libraries, the researchers themselves register publications, or the method could be a “proxy model”, whereby a local super-user registers publications for local research groups. Probably in many cases there is a mix of different methods.

A central issue which goes directly to the heart of issues involved in the registration of research publications, is the correct identification of a researcher, the researcher’s organisation and the researcher’s publications. This triangle of Person-Organisation-Document is the central issue which determines data quality in any system: it is necessary for us to unequivocally be able to identify each point of the triangle and to, in each instance, be able to unequivocally identify the connection between these three points. And as in so many other areas, time here is also an important factor which effects metadata: over time people change names and disappear, organisations change names and disappear, documents’ metadata changes, for example journals change names and disappear.

The importance of being able to identify the connection between the three points of the above triangle has grown over the previous years. In Denmark, due to the political focus on the *production* of research publications with the national bibliometric research indicator (a purely quantitative exerciser), it has become essential that systems are able to correctly (i.e. uniquely) identify and thereby quantify a researcher’s and an organisation’s research output. The Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for documents has played an important role in this quest, and the ResearcherID from Thomsen-Reuters was an attempt to deploy a unique ID for researchers, but with limited effect. For those involved in the daily exercise of having to ensure the uniqueness of each instance of the

Person-Organisation-Document triangle, it is also obvious that volume also plays a leading role. That scientists have here and there adopted the ResearcherID might have worked for them and given them, individually, usable functions, but what is essential, is that there are infrastructural functions available to disambiguate (and disembarass!) scientists on a national basis. Volume, i.e. coverage, is essential, to enable the national Danish research indicator to rest on solid ground, and that it is possible to produce bibliometric analyses based on correct data, not only for individuals but for large groups (whole organisations and countries). What is needed is a solution with a national scope.

Therefore there are at the moment discussions as to how, on a national basis, we can introduce the ORCID identification system for all Danish researchers. After the introduction of the national bibliometric research indicator, there exists a researcher database which is distributed to all Danish universities for use in their individual Pure installations. Here no unique ID is employed, and at best it is a help in the daily registration tasks, but by no means ensures correct combinations of Persons-Organisations-Documents. To be really effective (i.e. correct), the employment of an ID on a national basis will be essential and also essential that at the same time there is a coupling to the large bibliographic and bibliometric databases like Scopus, Web of Science etc. This would enable us to bypass some of the manual processes outlined in the first paragraph, to ensure correct registration. The one without the other would limit their usefulness.

Due to the fact that all Danish universities use the same repository system and have well-established lines of communication, it might just be possible to initiate actions to, on a national basis, uniquely identify people over time, using the ORCID system, to ensure the volume necessary to be effective. At the moment there are discussions just as to how this might be achieved, and which actions which will be required from Universities, libraries, repository managers, repository vendors and not least from universities and their researchers – preferably all of them.

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